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New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

In the absence of the President, Mrs. Mladineo (Croatia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Typhoon in the Philippines

The Acting President: I should like, on behalf of all of the members of the General Assembly, to extend our deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of the Philippines for the tragic loss of life and material damage that resulted from the recent typhoon.

May I also express the hope that the international community will show its solidarity and respond promptly and generously to any requests for help.

I call on the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Mercado (Philippines): The Philippines thanks you, Madam, for your message of sympathy to the families of those who perished as a result of the recent super typhoon and mudslides that struck the Philippines last week. To date, more than 500 people have been found dead and some 750 are still missing.

An initial estimate of the damage to infrastructure and agricultural crops caused by the super typhoon and mudslides is more than $750 million. More than 1.5 million people in 13 provinces and 10 cities have been affected by the disaster. While the main roads in the affected provinces have been cleared, widespread power and communications outages remain in most affected areas, and lack of a water supply is a major concern.

Owing to the magnitude of the disaster, the Philippine Government has appealed for international assistance for its relief and rehabilitation efforts. Priority needs of the Government at this stage include safe drinking water, water purifiers, emergency shelter, such as tents and tarpaulins, generator sets and medicines.

As I speak, the Philippine Government, assisted by the international community, is continuing its 24-hour recovery and relief efforts. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo declared a state of national calamity on 3 December and mobilized the army to speed up recovery efforts and the delivery of relief services.

Through you, Madam, the Philippines wishes to thank the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Australia, Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, South Korea, Spain, the United States and our neighbours Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore for their speedy response in assisting the Philippine Government and its people in coping with this tragedy.

Agenda items 47 and 113 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The Acting President: The General Assembly will resume its consideration of agenda items 47 and

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113 to hold, in accordance with resolution 60/265 of 30 June 2006, a specific meeting focused on development, including an assessment of progress over the previous year.

I am honoured to make the following statement on behalf of the President of the General Assembly, Her Excellency Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa.

> "During the sixtieth session, the General Assembly called for a specific meeting focused on development to be held during the sixty-first session in order to follow up on progress made to implement the outcomes of the 2005 World Summit and other internationally agreed development goals. Without doubt, those international agreements have made an unprecedented contribution to focusing attention and galvanizing global action in connection with one of the greatest challenges of our time: the fight against poverty and the promotion of human development for all.
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> "If we can achieve those shared development goals, not only will we put an end to poverty, but we can also help to make the world a safer, more stable and prosperous place for all.
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> "By integrating and coordinating the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, the General Assembly can make a real contribution.
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> "When poverty is so immediate and suffering so intense, the world has a moral and strategic obligation to address the concerns of the poorest and most vulnerable, particularly in Africa. Given the challenges that we face, I have put development at the centre of the agenda of my presidency of the General Assembly. That is why, on 27 November, the General Assembly held an informal thematic debate on development, entitled 'Partnerships towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals: taking stock, moving forward'.
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> "The aim of the debate was to take stock of progress made to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to accelerate progress by providing a forum to examine practical measures that can lead to tangible results. During the debate, which brought together donor and recipient countries, as well as civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, we heard examples of effective partnerships, new approaches and success stories, but also of the challenges that threaten faster progress. We heard new commitments from participants aimed at eradicating poverty, including the generous announcement made by the Islamic Development Bank to establish a $10 billion poverty alleviation fund.
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> "We heard that progress has been made towards reducing poverty and achieving the MDGs.
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> "Over the past 40 years, the proportion of people in developing countries who can read and write has risen from under one half to nearly three quarters. Average life expectancy has increased, and there are 300 million more children in school. Rates of extreme poverty have fallen rapidly in much of Asia. In 1990, more than 1.2 billion people — 28 per cent of the developing world's population — lived in extreme poverty. By 2002, the proportion had decreased to 19 per cent.
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> "Overall, steady progress is expected in the decade ahead. Thanks to increases in trade, aid and debt relief and to rapid economic growth in Asia, the number of people across the world living on less than $1 a day is expected to be halved by 2015.
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> "However, progress towards achieving the MDGs is likely to remain uneven without further action. Half a million women still die in pregnancy and childbirth each year, and although death rates of children under the age of five have been dropping, every day about 30,000 children still die of preventable causes. Over 100 million children still do not go to primary school.
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> "The biggest challenges are in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. On current trends, by 2015 over 90 per cent of the world's poor will live in those areas.
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> "Step by step, we are making progress. More is expected and further action is needed. The challenge for all of us is to make good on our commitments and work in closer partnership.
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> "Four key messages emerged from the informal thematic debate on development that

will no doubt be echoed here today. The first is that the commitments made at the major United Nations conferences and summits, particularly to create a global partnership for development, should be fulfilled in a timely fashion. Each of us here today has a responsibility for delivering our share of the commitments we have promised. We are all accountable.

"The second is that, by creating broader partnerships at the local, national and international levels, we can accelerate the implementation of the MDGs. Many delegations stressed that partnerships for development within their own countries, involving the public and private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, were important to achieving the MDGs.

"Thirdly, we heard that the United Nations is central to the implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs — from practical measures on the ground, to the broader role of the United Nations in convening and fostering global and local partnerships and providing technical support.

"Finally, we heard that by working together, we can implement the MDGs by 2015, and that doing so would be the single greatest gift to humanity that the international community has in its power to deliver.

"Going forward, the ultimate test of achieving our shared development goals will be how we manage the policy challenges of the future, including sustainable development, urbanization, water scarcity and climate change.

"A reformed and strengthened United Nations working with Government, civil society and the private sector will be better able to build capacity for development, rise to meet those new challenges and deliver more global public goals.

"But most of all, if the MDGs are to be achieved, it is critical that both developing and developed countries live up to the commitments made at last year's World Summit. As developing countries adopt comprehensive national strategies, donors must deliver on commitments to provide additional resources to enable them to succeed.

"Therefore, following on from the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, the year of promises and commitments, the sixty-first session must be the year of action and implementation. We must all strive to create an atmosphere that can build more effective partnerships towards achieving our shared goals. I remain convinced that we can achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. I hope that our discussions today can generate further action."

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Group welcomes this specific meeting focused on development in the General Assembly in accordance with paragraph 56 of the resolution on follow-up to development.

The economic development gap between developing countries and developed countries is still increasing. The world imbalances in the global economic, financial and trading regimes remain. The impact of developed countries' monetary and trade policies — and in particular their trade-distorting subsidies and non-tariff barriers — on developing countries remains unresolved. The full and timely implementation of all the outcomes of all the major conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields has still to be achieved. Therefore, all economic indications are that globalization has yet to deliver the poor from dehumanizing hunger and poverty.

The goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals are (MDGs) off-track, in particular in Africa, despite appropriate measures taken and tremendous efforts made by least developed and landlocked developing countries themselves to build enabling national environments for the implementation of the Brussels and Almaty Programmes of Action. Their efforts to pursue much-needed development are limited, as the support received from development partners is still insufficient, or sometimes even completely lacking.

As a result of the suspension in the Doha trade negotiations, the Group of 77 and China has noted with concern that that may result in further protectionist tendencies. We are also of the view that, without a rules-based multilateral trading system, trade distorting policies — including distortions caused by subsidies in agricultural trade and non-market access — will persist

unabated, which would threaten the credibility of the rules-based multilateral trading system, thereby jeopardizing the prospects of developing countries to generate additional export revenue and income from agricultural exports.

Developing countries have already prepared strategies and plans for development, and many have accumulated sufficient practice and experience to know what would be required of them in order to achieve sustainable development. For that reason, the Group of 77 and China has called for developing countries to be allowed full policy space to achieve their own objectives.

On the other hand, leading international monetary and financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, have as yet not taken into account national strategies, including the policy framework adopted by the United Nations, to ensure that their policies are in conformity with the developmental objectives of developing countries and are responsive to the needs and concerns of the poor.

The Bretton Woods institutions must play am active role, in close collaboration with the United Nations, to formulate a global strategy for the eradication of hunger and poverty in developing countries. Essential to that process is the active voice and effective participation of developing countries themselves in the decision-making processes of the Bretton Woods institutions. That is central to promoting the legitimacy, relevance and effectiveness of the international financial system, and crucial if developing countries are to succeed in eradicating poverty and accelerating economic growth in a sustainable manner.

The Secretary-General, as part of his first reform package, proposed the establishment of the United Nations Development Account, under which proceeds from the savings envisaged from administrative efficiencies would be transferred to the Account in order to facilitate the implementation of social and economic projects in developing countries. The expectations that the level of the Development Account would grow to at least $200 million by 2003 have not been met. A concrete decision by Member States is required to increase the maintenance base of the Account and to avoid establishing new mandates from "within existing resources", which ultimately deplete savings that should be transferred to the Development Account. The Group of 77 and China wishes to urge other Member States to live up to the political commitments made in December 2005 and to increase the maintenance base of the Development Account by $5 million.

The eradication of hunger and poverty still remains the greatest global challenge facing the international community today. A more concerted, coherent and coordinated approach to saving humankind from the scourge of dehumanizing and degrading hunger and poverty and its crippling effects on the most vulnerable in society, namely, women and children, is urgently needed.

If we are to succeed in achieving the goals and targets of the MDGs by 2015, then we must ensure that the global partnership for development is fully implemented. It is therefore imperative that developed countries fully deliver on all the commitments they have made. In that regard, the integrated and coordinated implementation of, and follow-up to, the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields is essential, and remains the priority role of the United Nations, if we are to succeed in lifting billions of people out of dehumanizing and degrading poverty and hunger.

The United Nations has a vital role to play in the promotion of an equitable global economic, financial and trading regime. The United Nations system and international organizations and institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, must translate all the commitments made at the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields into concrete and specific actions in order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

The Group of 77 and China cannot emphasize enough the need for the United Nations to play a fundamental role in the promotion of international cooperation for development and the coherence, coordination and implementation of internationally agreed development goals. The United Nations, and the developed countries in particular, need to demonstrate unequivocal political will to operationalize and implement all the commitments made to enhance the global partnership for development that has been undertaken in writing, and not just demonstrate

perfunctory service to the implementation of an equitable and balanced financial, economic and social global order. That is essential if we are to fulfil the mandate of achieving an equitable, integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to the global partnership for development to create a better life for all those millions of people who so desperately need to be lifted out of dehumanizing and degrading poverty and hunger.

The resolution on follow-up to development emphasized the need to fully implement the global partnership for development, including living up to all the commitments already made, so as to enable developing countries to achieve the goals and targets of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs by 2015. In that regard, the full implementation of MDG 8 — "to develop a global partnership for development" — is critical to the success of achieving the 2015 target.

Now is the time for the full and timely implementation of the resolution on follow-up to development, which clearly and succinctly outlined all the actions that must be undertaken in the context of the implementation of all the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields.

Mr. Rosengren (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The acceding countries of Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries of Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

The EU welcomes this first formal specific meeting on the follow-up to the development section of the World Summit Outcome. We are confident that our deliberations during today's debate will provide a good opportunity to exchange views on the specific issues of the development section.

The 2005 Summit emphasized that development must be based on a global partnership. The EU is committed to continue the building of a global partnership for development. In terms of aid policies, the EU has adopted an ambitious timetable for its member States to achieve the allocation of 0.7 per cent of gross national income to official development assistance (ODA) by 2015, with an intermediate collective target of 0.56 per cent by 2010.

In that regard, the EU recognizes the challenges in sub-Saharan Africa. The EU Africa strategy was agreed at the end of 2005, with a commitment to allocate to Africa half of the increase in EU aid. The strategy is committed to promoting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Strategic partnerships with other regions of the world have also been agreed since.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome stated that each country has the primary responsibility for its own development. The central role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized in the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. National ownership and leadership are prerequisites for sustainable development results. In that regard, there has been good progress at the country level, especially in terms of the introduction of poverty-reduction strategies. The EU remains firmly committed to supporting country-led sustainable development through actions on aid volume, aid effectiveness, debt relief, innovative finance mechanisms and trade. We support enhancing the voice and participation of developing countries in international financial institutions.

The United Nations has an opportunity to place itself in an incomparable position to provide technical assistance to draft and implement national development plans, following the lead of developing countries and in collaboration with other multilateral and bilateral donors. Operational effectiveness and inter-agency cooperation need to be strengthened in order for the system to be fully utilized for the benefit of those in need.

In drawing up their national development strategies, developing countries need — with international support — to make plans to achieve internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs and related national targets and objectives. Those include commitments made in the World Summit Outcome and the follow-up resolution regarding strengthening health systems and tackling HIV, tuberculosis and malaria; the implementation of education-for-all programmes; achieving universal access to reproductive health and promoting gender equality.

To be sustainable, poverty strategies must integrate environmental commitments to better manage the natural resource base of economic and social development. We must also all redouble our efforts to meet our commitments and obligations under the Framework Convention on Climate Change and to take forward the dialogue on long-term action to address climate change.

The World Summit Outcome document and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, taken together, have resulted in successful joint assistance strategies in several developing countries. Harmonization is key to achieving more and better results from development assistance. Achieving the MDGs requires improved policy coherence at the level of the United Nations and other multilateral cooperation forums, as well as at the national level. The EU has made concrete commitments to enhance policy coherence for development in 12 focal sectors. More recently, last October, the EU Council also agreed to improve its own decision-making systems so as to increase policy coherence for development.

The United Nations system needs to do the same. United Nations reform provides a good opportunity to do that. The recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence provide an opportunity for the United Nations to upgrade its performance in order to deliver better development results at the country level. The evaluation and monitoring of the performance of the United Nations system as regards its development effectiveness, results and responsiveness to national development challenges needs to be strengthened. The United Nations system should more systematically take advantage of lessons learned. System-wide monitoring and evaluation is of the utmost importance. Capacity development in developing countries is at the very core of development activities.

The United Nations World Summit set the objective of decent work for all. I am therefore pleased that the European Union is taking initiatives towards promoting decent work, both within its borders and in its external relations. Last week, the Council adopted conclusions on the possibilities of promoting decent work through social, development and trade policy measures. We also stated that it was essential to promote development programmes and to cooperate with the United Nations and the International Labour Organization.

The EU Council adopted conclusions in October 2006 that emphasize the need for increased and more effective aid for trade in order to enable all developing countries, particularly least developed countries, to integrate into the multilateral rules-based trade system and to urge the Community and the member States to put their respective commitments on trade-related assistance into operation.

The EU believes that the Doha Development Round negotiations should be continued as soon as possible. A successful outcome of the negotiations will bring about considerable development benefits.

The 2005 World Summit gave United Nations reform new impetus. The normative and analytic expertise of the United Nations, as well as its operational and coordination capacities, can only be fully used in a streamlined and more efficient system. That is imperative if the MDGs are to be achieved by 2015. There needs to be a strong partnership between the United Nations system, Member States and other stakeholders to support the United Nations in its reform efforts and to make sure that we proceed together towards concrete action.

Since the Summit, we have taken steps in the General Assembly to follow-up and build upon the commitment of our leaders — in the special session on HIV/AIDS and in the high-level meetings on least developed countries and migration. We have agreed on a date for a conference to review the Monterrey Consensus and have adopted resolutions on development follow-up itself and on strengthening the Economic and Social Council. The EU strongly supports those developments and looks forward to the coming year, when new functions of the Economic and Social Council will be inaugurated, especially the annual ministerial review and the development cooperation forum.

Mr. Hamburger (Netherlands): The Netherlands aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union (EU). We would like to add a few words from our own perspective as a key development partner.

The Netherlands was, and continues to be, strongly committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The MDGs and the Outcome of the 2005 World Summit guide our development cooperation policy. We do not need a new consensus on development; what we need now is

implementation in order to meet the commitments we have already made.

Many recent reports have made it clear that progress towards achieving the MDGs has been disappointing and uneven, despite many initiatives by developing countries themselves and the support provided by the international community. Especially for many of the least developed countries, the likelihood of attaining the MDGs by 2015 seems to become more remote every year. Although the responsibility for development lies first and foremost with developing countries themselves, meeting the MDGs is a shared responsibility of the entire international community. It requires a genuine partnership between developing and developed countries.

Developed countries have a special responsibility for achieving MDG 8. Recently, we reported on our efforts in our second MDG 8 report, and we will continue to do so regularly. It is important that all countries draw up MDG reports that account, in a transparent way, for national and international efforts.

An important aspect of MDG 8 is strengthening policy coherence at the national and international levels in support of the MDGs. We cannot give with one hand and take away with the other. It is particularly important in areas like trade, agriculture and the environment to meet the challenge of achieving synergy with development policy objectives.

Trade and integration into the regional and the world economy are essential preconditions for economic development and poverty reduction. The Netherlands supports an open, rules-based, predictable and non-discriminatory trade system, progressive trade liberalization and the elimination of distorting subsidies and non-tariff barriers. We deeply regret the suspension of the Doha negotiations and hope that they will resume soon. Developed and developing countries alike must do their utmost to ensure the successful conclusion of the Doha Round, and that it becomes a genuine development round.

Developed countries must also use debt cancellation to free up resources to realize the MDGs. The Netherlands supports debt cancellation for countries with an unsustainable debt burden, provided they are applying sound economic policies and good governance.

More efficient and effective use of existing resources is another area where important gains can be made. The implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness is crucial. Improving effectiveness by better coordination among donor organizations and by alignment, and by promoting country ownership and leadership, has already yielded results in a number of countries. Developing countries also have their own responsibility for making aid effective.

Let me also emphasize the need for better quality funding. More predictable and long-term funding and budget support, instead of project funding, is required. The Netherlands is contributing to that by changing its own funding behaviour.

Ultimately, the MDGs have to be achieved at the country level through MDG-based national poverty reduction strategies. One of the outcomes of the 2005 Summit was that developing countries should adopt and implement such strategies by the end of 2006. At the moment, many developing countries are formulating their MDG-based poverty reduction strategies, with the active participation of all actors at the national and local levels. However, it is clear that much more needs to be done before all developing countries have formulated and implemented their strategies.

The international aid architecture has become more and more complicated because of the proliferation of bilateral and multilateral donors and of international funds and other financial mechanisms. It is placing an ever-increasing burden on the capacity of developing countries. The United Nations occupies a unique place in the aid environment. To achieve the MDGs, we need not only the efforts of developed and developing countries but also an effective, efficient United Nations — one that works coherently on development, security and human right issues, and one that delivers, in particular, at the country level.

However, the United Nations system as a whole is not yet fully delivering services in that coherent and effective manner. The system is highly complex and fragmented. That is a major weakness. Its financing is still unpredictable, incentives for real teamwork are often lacking and competition for funding leads to transaction costs that are too high.

The report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence provides a unique opportunity to rethink the way the United Nations is

operating in the changing aid environment, especially at the country level. The Netherlands strongly supports the "One United Nations" concept for development at the country level. For our part, we need to reward a better integrated and coordinated multilateral system with greater and more predictable funding. A long-term commitment to achieve the MDGs requires a long-term funding commitment.

The Netherlands looks forward to discussing the report of the High-level Panel with our partners here in the United Nations and at the country level.

Mr. Butagira (Uganda): The past decade has witnessed a great number of important conferences and summits at which the international community committed to actions that, if effectively implemented, would signal a turning point in the global efforts to achieve the goals of sustainable development and poverty reduction. The commitments ranged from increasing resources for development and promoting sustainable development to making aid more effective.

It is important to note that all those major conferences and summits have given birth to ambitious but achievable goals and that achieving those goals is central to global stability and prosperity. The United Nations has played a crucial role in generating consensus on commitment to those goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Now it needs to take action to effect the achievement of these and other internationally agreed development goals and to support Governments in implementing national plans designed to achieve them.

The 2005 World Summit strongly emphasized the urgent need for an integrated effort to pursue the broader internationally agreed development goals and recognized the crucial role played by the conferences and summits in shaping a comprehensive vision to address the development challenges of our time in all their dimensions. By endorsing a broad vision of development, the Summit firmly placed the MDGs within the comprehensive agenda of the internationally agreed development goals. That move has given renewed political impetus and substantive significance to the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to United Nations conference outcomes. One thing that the Summit made clear was the urgent need for a comprehensive review process that would provide a full picture of overall progress in implementing the internationally agreed development goals and would allow for the formulation of multifaceted policies that effectively cover interlinkages between the various conference goals.

While efforts are being made at the national and international levels to implement conference outcomes, progress remains slow, with a considerable gap between implementation and commitments. Therefore, the major challenge for the international community is the continually widening gap between agreed commitments and the fulfilment of those commitments.

We note with great concern that implementation continues to face a serious lack of political will — especially on the part of the donor community — to carry out agreed commitments within the established time frame. The failure, except on the part of a few countries, to reach the official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income, which was adopted more than 30 years ago, is one example of the lack of political will. Although many developed countries have established timetables to achieve that target, their target dates are too close to the deadline for achieving the MDGs, namely, 2015, thus denying developing countries enough time for implementation. We could identify similar challenges being faced in the areas of debt relief, trade, environmental protection, et cetera, some of which are already known to many of us in the Assembly.

The challenges we face in implementing and following up on the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits are enormous, but not insurmountable. First and foremost, at the global level, the multilateral development system needs better global governance. There is a need to substantially improve the coherence of mandates and roles, as well as accountability and representation in the global governance system. We believe that that can be addressed through the ongoing system-wide reform of the United Nations aimed at making it more coherent and better able to deliver on implementation and follow-up and assist developing countries in achieving sustainable development goals. Factors that hinder the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals — including the MDGs — need to be identified, isolated and dealt with systematically in order to improve performance, while keeping the focus on areas where coordination and coherence need to be enhanced.

My delegation believes that a lot more could be achieved if the international community established an effective and comprehensive accountability and monitoring mechanism to track implementation by all development partners — especially the developed countries — of commitments undertaken at United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields and in various intergovernmental bodies to support the national development strategies of developing countries. Delayed action — or lack of action — on commitments has become the greatest obstacle to the achievement of goals in all areas in the context of global efforts to reduce poverty.

That is why we strongly support the recommendations of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence. In particular, my delegation believes that the establishment of a United Nations Sustainable Development Board, together with the appointment of a United Nations Development Coordinator with responsibility for the performance and accountability of United Nations development activities, will greatly enhance the Organization's ability to act effectively. That will ensure that the United Nations maintains its focus on outcomes, responsiveness to development needs and the delivery of results that can be measured against the goals to be achieved.

However, efforts to promote system-wide coherence at the United Nations to better support the developing countries will not yield the desired results unless there is coherence at the global level in development assistance policies on the part of the developed countries, which have to be harmonized with the policies adopted by the Bretton Woods institutions, international non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Better coordination at the global level is critical for success in that effort.

The United Nations remains the best and the only global Organization with the competence and the experience required to handle the task of global governance. Indeed, the 2005 World Summit entrusted the Economic and Social Council with the responsibility for implementation and follow-up, and for expanding its functions to cover two major new instruments for carrying out that task: the annual ministerial substantive review and the Development Cooperation Forum. That will enable the Council and its subsidiary bodies to serve as a more unified system at the global and regional levels to guide and support the implementation of the internationally agreed development agenda.

We believe that that additional function will contribute immensely to the central role of the Economic and Social Council: promoting economic and social development through the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. We appeal to the international community to give the necessary support to the Council to enable it to effectively perform this additional but essential function.

Meanwhile, the relevant United Nations departments and agencies with normative capacities should be encouraged to continue to carry out work pertaining to international norm-setting and to monitoring and following up on the commitments made by development partners. This activity should be carried out in conformity with relevant intergovernmental agreements reached in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and at United Nations conferences and summits.

Mr. Al-Fayez (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in connection with the agenda item under consideration.

We welcome the convening of this meeting to stress the need for partnerships in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Saudi Arabia has contributed to relaunching the development process in developing countries, especially in the least developed countries (LDCs), by putting in place development assistance programmes to address poverty and place sustainable development and stability on the right track.

Saudi Arabia believes that development and the eradication of poverty are moral and humanitarian responsibilities and that achieving global economic balance and comprehensive sustainable development require international solidarity on the basis of collective responsibility and without selectivity or preconditions of any sort. We therefore also believe that peace and development go hand-in-hand, for States cannot achieve their development goals in situations of conflict and in the absence of peace and stability. On the contrary, without peace there is likely to be backsliding as regards development. Examples of that

include violence and blockades inflicted by the occupying Power, as well as the destruction of property and the excessive use of the war machine in Lebanon and Palestine, which have prolonged the suffering of those peoples. The lack of a just and comprehensive peace has deprived the people of Palestine and the other peoples of the region of development.

We reaffirm the role of the United Nations in the promotion of development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals through the intensification of the development process and the exploitation of synergies among financing mechanisms. Achieving economic development, social stability, and confronting environmental and population problems should have higher standing among the priorities of the United Nations. In addition, the success of the development process depends upon respect by the international community for the traditions and cultural specificities of developing countries. In that regard, donor countries must realize that achieving the MDGs must be based upon the objectives set by each country.

Saudi Arabia believes that efforts to reform the global financial, monetary and trading system will not succeed without international consensus and the participation of the institutions concerned. At the same time, developing countries and least developed countries must demonstrate solidarity in tackling the obstacles they face to development, in order to achieve prosperity and well-being in their countries and strengthen their role in the international economy.

Saudi Arabia calls on the international community to find ways to cooperate globally to build a world economic order in a positive spirit, taking into account the national interests of countries without undermining the mandates of specialized international organizations.

Saudi Arabia hopes that a new humanitarian consensus will emerge based on partnership between developed and developing countries and on cooperation and solidarity in international economic relations that are grounded in justice, equality and capacity-building in order to strengthen the competitiveness of the developing countries and ensure access of their products to world markets.

In conclusion, we wish to emphasize that there will not be real development, economic prosperity and political stability in one part of the world only, while other parts suffer from hunger, poverty and the disasters of war and conflict. The use of force and violence in the resolution of conflicts has led to tremendous loss of human life and finances, damage to property, destruction of natural resources and the trampling of human dignity, and economic and social underdevelopment in developing countries. We believe that development can only be achieved through stability, and that stability can only be achieved through full respect for international legitimacy, dialogue and equality among States. There is no doubt that a spirit of cooperation and consensus will allow the international community to take the necessary measures to ensure development in the twenty-first century.

Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica): My delegation wishes to join other speakers in expressing our pleasure at the convening of this very important plenary discussion on the issue of development. May I, at the outset, align my delegation with the statement that has been delivered by the Ambassador of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Today's meeting not only reinforces the need for the United Nations to address development on its own merits but underscores its centrality to the overall work of the Organization. It represents an important step towards ensuring that Members States and the wider United Nations system remain closely focused and reflective of the fundamental role that the United Nations plays in promoting development issues. We stand ready to support efforts in that regard.

Since the holding of the 2005 World Summit, the international community has taken positive steps towards moving the development agenda forward. Among the most salient steps have been the adoption by the General Assembly of the resolution on follow-up to the development outcome of the 2005 World Summit and, most recently, the adoption of the resolution on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council. While we would have wanted to see more ambitious and bold proposals in both resolutions, beyond the reiteration of agreed language, we are pleased that the General Assembly was at least able to pronounce itself on what Jamaica feels are critical issues. It paves the way for the international community to make even more progress towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals

(MDGs), and towards ensuring that the United Nations is properly equipped to advance the process.

Now is the time to move beyond agreed language to the implementation of agreed commitments. We accept that that will involve further reflection on how best to improve coordination and promote coherence throughout the United Nations system. We are committed to working with others to that end. However, such an exercise must be informed by the greater objective of ensuring that the United Nations remains responsive to the needs of the millions of impoverished people around the world. We shall therefore study with great interest the proposals aimed at advancing that objective, including those contained in the recently released report of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment.

One area in which we would have hoped to have seen more significant developments since the 2005 World Summit is that of trade. Despite the acknowledged importance of international trade as an engine for economic growth and development, there has been no forward movement on the now-stalled Doha trade negotiations. Each day without further progress in the trade talks severely jeopardizes and compromises the integrity of the multilateral trading system. We therefore urge all parties, in particular developed countries, to demonstrate the necessary political will, not only to successfully conclude the negotiations but, in so doing, to adhere to the development imperatives and commitments of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, the 1 August 2004 decision of the General Council of the World Trade Organization and the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration.

Allow me, at this juncture, to identify four key issues that must continue to inform our deliberations on development.

The first concerns that of improved coordination and collaboration, both within and throughout the system and between the United Nations system and such bodies as the Bretton Woods institutions. It is imperative that we strengthen coordination within the United Nations system, in close cooperation with all other multilateral financial, trade and development institutions, in order to support sustained economic growth, the eradication of poverty and hunger, and sustainable development, especially in developing countries. Such collaboration and coordination can be undertaken without prejudice to the respective areas of competence of the institutions concerned. We see no other viable alternative to such an approach if we are to make significant progress, within the agreed timeframes, towards the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Equally important is the need to ensure that the United Nations system as a whole is not impeded in its efforts to shape a broad development vision and to identify commonly agreed objectives by duplication and overlap in the discharge of mandates for operational activities for development. Neither should the system be crippled by an overabundant reliance on earmarked voluntary contributions for programmes at the country level.

We also view greater cooperation between Member States as being instrumental to advancing international cooperation for development. That notion is correctly embodied in what has become known as the global partnership for development. It remains an important tool for fostering cooperation at the national, regional and international levels, as well as for providing a comprehensive and mutually beneficial framework to advance development objectives for both developed and developing countries. In our view, a key component of that framework is that of more targeted and substantial technical and financial assistance. For that reason, we welcome and encourage even greater commitments of support, especially with respect to debt and official development assistance, and endorse the call for continued efforts aimed at enhancing the quality of aid and increasing its impact. We support in particular calls for concrete, effective and timely action in implementing all agreed commitments on aid effectiveness, with clear monitoring and deadlines.

On the matter of debt, we would wish to underscore the importance of comprehensively addressing the debt problem of developing countries, including middle-income developing countries, whose debt problems are oftentimes not fully taken into account in the formulation of initiatives at the multilateral level.

Secondly, the debate on development must be guided by respect for national ownership and the formulation of national development strategies in

accordance with national priorities. We are pleased that that acknowledgement is featuring more prominently in the deliberations both here in the United Nations and in the wider international discourse on development issues. Such an approach is critical to providing developing countries with the necessary policy space to undertake and to meet their national and international obligations.

It is also important to bear in mind that there is no single sustainable model for development. Developing countries face a diverse range of economic conditions, constraints and opportunities. Accordingly, development plans and policies should be determined through internal processes based on national priorities. Development must also be premised on the principles of inclusiveness and transparency, especially as regards global economic governance and global economic decision-making. Good governance at the international level is fundamental for achieving sustainable development, and to ensuring a dynamic and enabling international economic environment.

Thirdly, we must now work towards translating into concrete action the commitments made with respect to the internationally agreed development goals and objectives. For that reason, we applaud the recent decision of the General Assembly to consider establishing effective mechanisms to monitor, review and follow up the implementation of the outcomes of all major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields. We look forward to continued discussions in that regard in the General Assembly, as well as in the Economic and Social Council, in particular through the annual ministerial reviews and in the context of the development cooperation forum.

Fourthly, our focus on development must take into account the special needs of the most vulnerable groups of countries, namely, those of small island developing States, least developed countries and landlocked developing States. The lack of progress or the uneven progress made by those countries in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, reinforces the urgency with which greater efforts have to be undertaken to strengthen global partnership in the follow-up to, and implementation of, the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

In addition to the financial assistance required to support the implementation of those commitments, we look to the international community for support in the area of capacity-building, in order to enable those countries to overcome their development challenges.

I wish to conclude by reaffirming Jamaica's commitment to working with the international community in the area of development. We are already doing so with a number of development partners in several key areas. Those include education, HIV/AIDS, poverty and the environment, health and justice, as well as peace and security. Under a recent agreement between the Government and the United Nations Development Programme, for example, we stand to benefit from more than $7.5 billion in development support under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the period 2007-2011. It is through continued concerted efforts like those by all that we can ensure the timely and full realization of the internationally agreed development goals, which are key to attaining the objective of poverty eradication. The United Nations remains an essential player in the entire process.

Mr. Miller (United States of America): As contained in paragraph (a) of Article 55, the United Nations Charter's mandate for economic and social development states that the United Nations shall promote "higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development". I emphasize "conditions of ... progress and development" because it is clear from that phrase that the founders of this great institution saw development as a process, not a goal. Development is not something one achieves, it is something that one does. It is a process of change, improvement and growth.

How strange our language is on this subject. We divide ourselves into developed countries and developing countries. What does it mean to be developed? Does the process of development stop? And why, when we speak of developing countries, do we automatically express concern? Do we not all strive

to be developing? A continuing process of development is precisely what the United Nations Charter instructs us to promote.

It is not my intention to belabour a point of semantics. But I do want to note that our language is imprecise. Because of that, it is vitally important that our thinking be clear. Our concern here is not for developing countries per se, but rather for those that are not developing, not progressing, not changing — at least not fast enough to provide higher standards of living for their populations.

In economics, we measure the rate at which a country is progressing or developing primarily by measuring the rate at which its income per capita is growing. We achieve income growth by increasing productivity. We increase productivity primarily by improving health, education and access to capital. The Millennium Summit's Millennium Development Goals reflect the international community's emphasis on the first two of those factors, health and education. The Goals are concentrated heavily in those areas. The United States interacts in many ways with countries that are not developing or are developing too slowly, to help improve the health and education levels of their populations.

During the Bush Administration, the United States Government's international support for primary education has gone from $98 million in 2000 to more than $465 million this year. The United States provides the highest dollar level of official development assistance (ODA) for primary education of any donor, and at least 70 per cent of all United States ODA for education goes specifically to primary education.

In the area of health, the United States has made the largest commitment ever by any nation to an international health initiative dedicated to a single disease — a five-year, $15 billion, multifaceted approach to combating HIV/AIDS in more than 120 countries. The United States has also been, by far, the largest donor nation to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. During 2004 and 2005, the United States contributed $873 million to the Global Fund. The United States intends to contribute $844.5 million to the Global Fund for the period 2006-2007, bringing the total United States contribution to more than $2.3 billion. Through contributions such as those, the United States intends to combat ignorance, relieve suffering, help achieve the Millennium Development Goals and enable people in poorer countries to enjoy happier, more productive lives.

Surprisingly, the Millennium Summit paid little attention to the most significant factor that increases productivity: access to capital. In 2002, the United Nations addressed that oversight at the International Conference on Financing for Development held at Monterrey. The Monterrey Consensus focused on ways to mobilize capital for development through domestic savings, international trade, foreign direct investment, debt relief and official development assistance. The importance of domestic sources of capital was highlighted through ground-breaking work by economist Hernando de Soto, who estimated, for example, that as much as $9.3 trillion in untitled real estate capital was owned by the poor in developing countries. What was needed to gain access to that capital and put it to work was regulatory reform, property rights, the rule of law and a streamlined business environment. Globalization was recognized as a second extraordinary potential source of capital, with gains from trade in the hundreds of billions of dollars available in a liberalized trade environment. Other sources of public and private capital, such as debt relief, foreign direct investment and remittances, were also recognized as significant.

At Monterrey, President Bush called for the establishment of a new compact for global development. By January 2004, such a new compact had been established as the Millennium Challenge Account, which offers help to countries that undertake regulatory and governance reforms ensuring the effective use of assistance. The goal is to help such countries integrate more fully into the global economic system and gain access to the vastly larger sources of capital that are available in the private sector.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation has identified more than two dozen countries that are eligible for assistance and has signed multi-year commitments with 10 of them. Just recently, Mali — one of the poorest countries in the world, with an annual per capita income of only $380 — signed on to a compact that will dedicate nearly half a billion dollars to irrigation, transportation and industrial infrastructure development. In just two years, the Millennium Challenge programme has provided more than $3 billion in foreign aid to countries that have assumed ownership and taken responsibility with regard to their own development.

The United States has also become the largest provider of trade-related assistance. In December 2005, at the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference held in Hong Kong, the United States announced its plan to more than double its contributions to the global Aid for Trade programme, from $1.34 billion in 2005 to $2.7 billion annually by 2010. Net goods imports by the United States from the developing countries totalled $487 billion in 2005, dwarfing the size of financial flows from any other sources to those countries. Finally, non-trade private financial flows from the United States to poorer countries — in the form of personal remittances, net private investment and non-governmental organization grants — total $119 billion, four times the amount of United States official development assistance.

At the beginning of my statement, I noted that development is a process — a process of change, improvement and growth. Through programmes and policies such as those that I have described, my Government seeks to help others, and particularly the poorest, to make that process as rapid and as profound as possible.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): My delegation congratulates you, Madam President, on the holding of this important meeting. We believe that our deliberations will underscore the requirements for achieving the internationally agreed development goals and will help to bring development to centre stage in the context of United Nations activities.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement of South Africa made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. However, I would like to highlight the following issues.

In our lifetime, the world has witnessed significant progress. More people than ever before are succeeding each year in breaking out of the trap of poverty. Many more are living in greater progress and prosperity.

But every one in this world does not equitably enjoy the fruits of these advances. One quarter of the world's population lives on less than one dollar a day. The gap between rich and poor continues to expand. What we now need is a new development paradigm with a focus on poverty alleviation and an appropriate mix of quality and quantity of growth.

The least developed countries (LDCs) are the most underprivileged. They confront such significant structural impediments that they are by themselves unable to break out of the trap of poverty. Unable to integrate themselves into the world economy in a meaningful way, they are threatened with marginalization. A number of them are slowly but inexorably sliding into a state of regress. These countries continue to do so because of their intrinsic inability to mobilize external and domestic resources and put them to productive use. Global support to them is woefully inadequate. The international community must provide the enabling ambiance and support to them. That is the overarching aim of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

In my own country, Bangladesh, we believe that we must ourselves be in control of our development destiny. From our experience, we have learned that every society performs best when it depends on its own intellectual and cultural resources. We have found that the simplest home-grown ideas can often effect the profoundest changes. Take microcredit and women's non-formal education, for instance. Developments in these areas have transformed our societal landscape. We are pleased that the guiding spirit of microcredit, Professor Muhammad Yunus, has been accorded global recognition with the award of this year's Nobel Peace Prize. Professor Yunus says he looks forward to the day when poverty can be put away in a museum showcase.

So it remains our view that development is best achievable through a prudent mix of appropriate strategies, sound macroeconomic management and careful use of external support, all within a culture of pluralism, democracy, good governance, human rights, gender justice and women's empowerment. The existence of a vibrant civil society is key. The modest achievements of Bangladesh, and there have been many despite our manifold constraints, are attributable to our adherence to these values.

Pragmatic policies and programmes have contributed to the rapid advancement in our basic human development indicators. The economy is growing at 6.5 per cent. Poverty has been reduced by 40 per cent. We have already achieved two MDGs, namely, access to safe drinking water and removal of gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Enrolment in primary education for 97 per cent of our children has been ensured. Child and infant mortality rates have now dropped to 65 per thousand.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report 2005 registered Bangladesh's noteworthy success in the social sectors. The report recognized that Bangladesh achieved this progress through stronger State action and civic activism despite the relatively modest level of income growth.

The 2005 report placed Bangladesh in the medium human development category. The UNDP Human Development Report 2006 revealed that Bangladesh has demonstrated impressive gains in the water and sanitation sectors. That report notes that, ten years ago, Bangladesh had the lowest level of access to sanitation. It is now on target to achieve nationwide sanitation coverage by 2010.

In our view, four strategies have contributed to our human development take-off. First, there are the active partnerships developed with civil society. Secondly, there is the transfer of resources to targeted groups. Thirdly, we have implemented extended health programmes, including widespread immunization coverage. Fourthly, we have developed virtuous cycles for the benefit of women, including access to microcredit.

Despite all these forms of progress, the reality remains that we still have a long way to go if we are to achieve all of the MDGs. Several essential measures are prerequisite and that is the incontrovertible reality. These measures must be undertaken in the spirit of partnership that our leaders have agreed during the Millennium Summit.

The first of these measures is the expansion of official development assistance in consonance with the commitments made by developed countries. Secondly, an immediate commitment to writing off all outstanding debts of all LDCs must be made. Thirdly, immediate duty-free, quota-free market access for all products from all LDCs on a lasting basis must be allowed. Fourthly, all kinds of protectionism, including arbitrary use of non-tariff, non-trade and other restrictive barriers must be eliminated. Fifthly, rules of origin criteria must be made realistic, simple and flexible. Sixthly, free access of all categories of service providers under Mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) must be provided. Finally, the voice of and participation by the developing and least developed countries in the decision-making processes of the Bretton Woods Institutions must be enhanced.

The Millennium Summit set forth an ambitious vision for the international community. It was meant to achieve a sea change for the developing world. Our age is different from all others that have gone before. That is so, because today we believe that alleviating the pains of some is the responsibility of all.

We must work collectively to expand the scope of hope for humanity and to create a world where peace and stability reign, where the ambiance is appropriate for development, where the environment is protected and where disease and poverty are drastically reduced. We in the developing world are eager to forge ahead, in partnership with others, with the achievement of our aspirations. For we know that, when there is a hill to climb, waiting will not make it any smaller.

Mr. Sen (India): We are happy to participate in a meeting focused on development. We thank the Secretary-General for the reports on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields. We associate ourselves with the statement made by South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

For developing countries, the centrepiece is development. If the agenda of the United Nations diverges substantially from the agenda of development, then the very purpose and validity of this Organization will come under a question mark.

More than two and half decades ago, the representative of one of the developed countries famously said that the right to development is a letter to Santa Claus. If that is the case, then that is the only kind of Santa Claus in which the adults of the developing countries believe. What is more, Santa Claus does occasionally answer our letters.

Since the Millennium Summit in 2000, progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals has been uneven and the levels of human deprivation remain stagnant. The challenges remain most pressing in Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, where the proportion of people living in extreme poverty is essentially unchanged since 1990 and the absolute number has increased dramatically. In fact, the absolute number has doubled.

It is also worth remarking here in this context that the total agricultural subsidies of the United States, the European Union and Japan exceed the total income of sub-Saharan Africa. I saw an article recently indicating that 2 per cent of the people own 50 per cent of the world's assets. This is not a situation that is likely to be politically or morally sustainable for a long time.

Reference was made by one of the earlier speakers to Article 55 of the Charter, which also emphasizes full employment. That goes back to 1945, when the International Trade Organization (ITO) was supposed to be set up but was not, and the Charter of the ITO similarly included this, on an issue which remains relevant to economic theory even today, namely that getting prices right or liberalizing is not enough to achieve welfare maximization. There have to be separate and positive policies on achieving full employment.

It is true that the categories of developed and developing countries need to be understood in the light of the fact that the developed countries, too, need to develop. Here, in the context of the issue of poverty, may I mention that economists have estimated that between 1999 and 2004, even in the most advanced country in the world, the United States, while average income increased by 11 per cent, the median household income — that is, the income of the family at the centre — actually fell by 3 per cent, or $1,500. So that is a relevant argument.

It is no coincidence that the 2005 World Summit reaffirmed that the realization of the Millennium Development Goals would require stronger international cooperation for development and stressed the need for the United Nations to play a fundamental role in the promotion of international cooperation for development. The United Nations played a creative and critical leadership role in shaping the international economic agenda in the 1970s. It has to do so again. The agreement on the follow-up to development commitments and goals is a welcome step.

Development follow-up resolution 60/265 emphasized the urgent need to fully implement the global partnership for development and to enhance the momentum generated by the 2005 World Summit. In this sense it recognized the need for a shift in debates from principles to practicalities or, in other words, from normative debates to a phase of implementation. Implementation should be understood broadly to include resources as well as interpretation, building further on what is unclear or incomplete, and doing this in terms of the evolving reality outside. We need to look at problems of resources and interpretation. The physical and social infrastructure in some countries is sometimes too weak to attract any private investment, and therefore the fulfilment of developed countries' commitment to the 0.7 per cent target for official development assistance as well as innovative sources of financing are crucial.

In that context, we are happy to note that several developed countries are making efforts to meet their commitments in terms of official development assistance. We are also encouraged that some of them have also made available — one of them did so today — information on their efforts in this direction, as agreed in the development follow-up resolution. Some views have been expressed with regard to the role of private investment in economic growth, and we welcome all this.

The de facto veto and the lack of transparency and public accountability and, above all, the relative economic weights and the governmental structure of 1945, which is totally antiquated and inapplicable to the economic realities of today, might still have been accepted if at least the Bretton Woods institutions had managed to ensure international economic and financial stability. But this is quite clearly and manifestly not the case. The standard advice on capital account convertibility and on belt-tightening by Governments in the face of fiscal surpluses has not only contributed to the crisis but has in fact made the crisis worse. The poorest countries, on the other hand, continue to strain under increasing conditionalities, which mark even the new policy support instrument of 2005.

In that context, therefore, it is necessary to assess the performance of these international institutions and to suggest correctives leading to reform, because, otherwise, what was predicted by the late Milton Friedman, the great economist, from an entirely different perspective might well happen. He had actually argued that the International Monetary Fund should be abolished. Of course, he argued this from the perspective that the money market should be left to equilibrate. But that could happen from the perspective that I have just outlined — that is, the opposite perspective.

The inequities in the global monetary, financial and trading systems remain. The Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO) have strayed far away from their original mandate, which is employment-generating macroeconomic policies. Developing countries need rule-based multilateral regimes, but such rules have to be truly equitable and should not have an adverse impact on the scope for the implementation of their national development strategies. In the context of defending livelihoods, the sovereign functions of the State cannot be undermined, and regimes that erode the autonomy of policy space need to be reformed. Therefore, a fundamental reform of international monetary, financial and trading institutions is essential, underpinned by new and truly equitable rules.

It is also crucial for the United Nations to undertake a regular and periodic review and assessment of international economic policies and of their impact on development. In the context of systemic issues, it is particularly important to implement the commitment to enhance the ability of developing countries to participate meaningfully in decision-making, an important component of which is to provide assistance to developing countries in enhancing their capacity to assess the impact on them of policy changes. Most of the developing countries do not have the resources to do so.

The deliberative discussions of the WTO and of other international economic organizations could be complemented if there were an independent body to evaluate alternative proposals and their impact on developing countries. The United Nations is best placed to do so. Assessments must be made of the disparity between predicted consequences and what actually happens. The Economic and Social Council has the responsibility to review the policies of the Bretton Woods institutions. Efforts should be made to ensure that that responsibility is carried out fully and to examine how other economic policies could be brought into this review.

We welcome the agreement reached in this regard in the context of strengthening the Economic and Social Council. We are confident that the Council, on the basis of the review and assessment of international economic policies — the international financial, monetary and trade policies of relevant institutions — will make recommendations where needed, so that the necessary correctives will make the international economic environment supportive of development. This will not only increase confidence in, and the legitimacy of, international economic governance, but also may lead to better economic governance that may benefit both the developing and the developed world. It is logical that the General Assembly will have some views, primarily to build on the focused consideration of these issues in the Economic and Social Council. Specific meetings focused on development will go a long way, not only in building complementarity between the Council and the General Assembly, but also in enhancing the development agenda of the United Nations.

Seventy per cent of the gains of trade liberalization since the Uruguay round have actually benefited the developed countries, and only 30 per cent have benefited the developing countries. The developed countries, on average, charge tariffs on the products of developing countries that are four times higher than those on the products of developed countries. Those are estimates made by well-known economists. We therefore have to do something to break the impasse reached by the Doha round.

The suspension of the Doha round of trade negotiations is therefore a cause for concern, because so far it has delivered neither fair trade nor development, although it was supposed to be a development round. The impasse, as well as the recent discussions in the Second Committee, have shown that while national borders should not matter for trade and capital flows, we should not raise the issue of technology and labour flows; while subsidies are bad for industrial goods, we should not talk about agricultural subsidies; while the private interests of intellectual property rights holders are sacrosanct, we should not discuss the public interest or protecting the biogenetic resources of developing countries.

The resumption of trade negotiations is desirable, but adhering to the agreed mandates of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, the July Framework and the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration is a categorical imperative. A demonstration of political will by the developed countries will be required if negotiations are to be saved. A clear political direction to the WTO by the United Nations, among others, therefore remains necessary.

India has consistently maintained that the process of United Nations reform should be driven by a vision

of a strengthened role for the United Nations on development issues. We recognize that the delivery role of the United Nations will perforce be peripheral, given the modest funds available to the United Nations and the huge requirements of developing countries.

Yet there is an important catalytic role to be played by the United Nations. What is needed is to address the fundamental issue of the gap between mandates and financial resources for their fulfilment. We are confident that discussions in the context of promoting system-wide coherence will give the utmost consideration to this fundamental issue of a resource gap. Preliminary consideration has highlighted the need for enhanced allocations in the regular budget for the developmental activities of the United Nations.

With regard to the needs of small States, in particular those of small island developing States, it is important that, in the context of confining the United Nations Development Programme to so-called niche areas, the developmental role of that body not be eliminated.

In the context of the role of the United Nations in development, it is also important to strengthen the current accountability framework for executive management at the levels of Under- and Assistant Secretaries-General, including formal and transparent performance evaluations and sanctions for not meeting performance targets. The voice and effective participation of developing countries is important, not only in the context of international economic policymaking but also in the management and administration of the Organization — as well as important for pursuing the development agenda, which is the overriding priority of the majority of the membership of the Organization, namely, developing countries. It is particularly important that developing countries are represented at the executive management levels and that there is a balance in representation between developed and developing countries.

The ongoing debate in the context of human resources management thus assumes significance. It might also be useful to further consider the establishment of an open and transparent appointment process, including through broad consultations and confirmation by the General Assembly for improving accountability. We look forward to discussions on the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on governance.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): The delegation of Pakistan is grateful to the President of the General Assembly for the decision to convene this plenary meeting on the implementation of the decisions of major United Nations conferences on development. The informal thematic debate on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that was held on 27 November was very useful. That was also testimony to the President's commitment to development — a central pillar of the work of the United Nations, its major raison d'être and its principal responsibility.

International economic relations are, obviously, unequal and inequitable for developing countries. Paradoxically, globalization has expanded both prosperity as well as poverty: the rich have become richer but the poor have become poorer, and are growing in number and proportion. In recent years, growth in the developing and developed worlds has not been accompanied by growth in employment, thereby enlarging the circle of the poor. Growth with equity should be the prime target of development. Growth with equity should be the target of the United Nations.

Today international economic and social relations are conducted through multiple channels, at the policy and operational levels. There is, however, general agreement about the goals and policies that we have to achieve at the national, regional and international levels, especially because of the decisions taken by numerous conferences and summits convened by the United Nations over the past several years, including the 2000 Millennium Summit and the 2005 United Nations Summit. Those decisions are collectively denoted as the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. What has been absent thus far is an overarching mechanism to ensure adequate follow-up and implementation of the internationally agreed development goals and the MDGs, as well as to ensure coherence and coordination in the governance of international and national policies relating to those development objectives.

Resolution 60/265, on follow-up to the development outcomes of the 2005 Summit, provided for the convening of this special meeting of the General Assembly to review the progress made in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals and the MDGs. Indeed, implementation has remained the Achilles heel of the endeavours of the United Nations in the field of development. In order to enable a meaningful review,

this special meeting should have been preceded by an adequate preparatory process. The most essential component of this process would be the establishment of a monitoring mechanism — perhaps through the annual ministerial review that the Economic and Social Council is to hold each year — that could measure, on an objective basis, the progress or lack thereof in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals and the MDGs.

Such an objective evaluation requires the elaboration of a comprehensive matrix of development goals, targets, indicators and actors involved in the implementation of each of the internationally agreed development goals and the MDGs in the fields of finance, trade and technology, as well as in the social sectors. Such an evaluation and matrix would enable an assessment of the actions taken by all the relevant players — national Governments, development partners, international institutions, civil society and the private sector — in the full realization of the internationally agreed development goals and MDGs.

We trust that that work of developing such a comprehensive matrix is being actively implemented by the relevant departments of the United Nations — including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Statistical Commission — in consultation with other relevant development agencies and institutions.

It is on the basis of the objective information within such a comprehensive matrix that the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions could carry out evaluations of the progress being made towards the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals and MDGs. In turn, their evaluations could enable such a special meeting of the General Assembly to provide policy guidance to enhance such implementation and to make recommendations for adjustments to policy. To enable the General Assembly to provide such policy guidance, it is also essential that the Assembly hold this special meeting concurrently with the annual general debate, thereby enabling high-level policymakers, including ministers, heads of State and heads of Government, to participate in, and contribute to, the Assembly's deliberations and decisions.

We trust that, beginning with the sixty-second session of the General Assembly and the coming sessions of the Economic and Social Council and its annual Ministerial Review, such a process of objective and high-level evaluation of the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals and the MDGs can soon be put in place.

Mr. Baum (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): We are meeting today to undertake a first review of the implementation of resolution 60/265. As this resolution was adopted just six months ago, too little time has elapsed for any progress to have occurred in the various areas it covers. My comments will therefore focus on two recommendations that address the United Nations specifically.

First, the resolution calls for the United Nations to play a key role in the promotion of international cooperation for development and to ensure coherence, coordination and implementation of the international agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Switzerland subscribes entirely to this essential message and stresses that resolution 57/270 B still provides an adequate and relevant framework for the United Nations in this context. Development is a highly complex issue and we therefore believe that it is in the interest of the United Nations to tackle the components of development by separating them in a logical manner, to avoid dealing with mere generalities. What is required is to adopt a well-structured approach, for example, as agreed upon by the General Assembly in resolutions 57/270 B and 59/250. But that approach requires a collective discipline to implement what has been agreed upon, and so that it can serve as a basis for our future action.

In this context, my delegation believes that the 2005 World Summit Outcome document offers a unique opportunity to collectively strengthen the Economic and Social Council. Both the annual Ministerial Review and the Development Cooperation Forum can help achieve that goal, subject to the condition that we make sure that they provide genuine value added. As we have stated on previous occasions, we will base our assessment on the strengthening of the convening power of the Council's high-level segment. We all hope to see large numbers of ministers attending the meeting. Let us therefore ask ourselves what could be of interest to them; what could motivate them. This

will be possible only if meetings deal with narrowly focused thematic subjects and if the Secretariat and the Member States have sufficient time to prepare for them.

The new Development Cooperation Forum offers valuable potential to harmonize and improve the relationships among bilateral aid, multilateral aid and other aid mechanisms; move the discussion on aid effectiveness to a truly multilateral level; offer a platform where the voice of the beneficiaries, including Governments, can be heard and is given adequate consideration; provide a comprehensive overview of the existing funding channels, including major private foundations as well as emerging donors; and promote consensus on the harmonization and balancing of the funding architecture.

With respect to the annual Ministerial Review and the customary thematic debate, Switzerland is convinced that they should have coherent themes, ideally one theme per year. It is quite unlikely that three different ministerial groups — on environment, finance and agriculture, for example — could follow each other in the context of a single high-level segment.

For the same reason, we need to avoid mixing the functions and debates of the follow-up process to the Monterrey Conference with those of the Economic and Social Council. We now have a United Nations intergovernmental architecture that allows us to address four fundamental aspects of development. First, there is the review of global development objectives at the annual Ministerial Review. Secondly, we have the review of the financing issues related to development as part of the Monterrey follow-up process. Thirdly, there is the coordination of United Nations development architecture in the Economic and Social Council. Finally, there is the effectiveness of development cooperation in the Development Cooperation Forum and the triennial review. Let us improve our intergovernmental architecture in such a way that these different functions can be strengthened.

My second point involves concrete, effective and timely action in implementing all agreed commitments on aid effectiveness, as called for in resolution 60/265.

In the specific United Nations context, we have an ongoing, uncompleted agenda, spelled out in the triennial comprehensive policy review. It aims at assuring the alignment and harmonization of the United Nations development system, at reducing transaction costs and at ensuring that its efforts translate into improved implementation capacity and enhanced absorptive capacity of the beneficiary countries.

Considerable progress has been made in the implementation of the triennial review process in the United Nations development system, but mostly by the four so-called "ExCom" agencies. Much remains to be done, especially to ensure that the most important and development-relevant specialized agencies join the United Nations country teams.

The High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence recently delivered its report to the Secretary-General. While Switzerland is still studying it, nevertheless, at this early stage, we already consider that the report contains quite a number of particularly interesting recommendations.

The upcoming triennial review should be prepared with great care both at the Secretariat and the intergovernmental levels. In doing so, we need to ensure that the various executive boards continue to function in a satisfactory manner while taking all the necessary decisions. The triennial review is not about totally recasting the operational system, but seeks to strengthen it, while allowing it to continue to function at full capacity. That is all the more important as those issues at stake are of high complexity and very often appear to be highly technical.

Mr. Pedroso (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the initiative of convening today's meeting to concentrate on the problems associated with development. It is particularly relevant for the United Nations, which over the last 15 years has worked to build an international consensus on development from which many international commitments and goals have arisen. We fully support the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf the Group of 77 and China.

The United Nations does not need new development commitments in the economic and social areas. As we had the occasion to state in the General Assembly's debate on 20 November, in the more than five years that have elapsed since the Millennium Declaration was adopted, the so-called development agenda for our nations is very far from being effectively implemented, due to the major challenges and obstacles that continue to be placed in the way of

countries of the developing world by the neoliberal globalization process. Lasting solutions to the issues addressed in the Monterrey Consensus — such as official development assistance, foreign debt, foreign direct investment and international trade — remain an illusion. The important goals agreed on in Johannesburg for the true achievement of sustainable development are far from being fulfilled.

As we stated previously, neither the international community nor the United Nations needs new goals or commitments; what is required is explicit political will on the part of developed countries. It is now more necessary than ever for those countries to honour the commitments they have entered into. They must move from oration to action, shoulder their responsibilities and not attempt to delay the fulfilment of the commitments that have been made. Solving the problems that continue to afflict poor countries is the concern of the entire international community, without distinction between rich or poor. It is essential that we all work in the framework of genuine multilateral international cooperation that is based on the principles of solidarity, complementarity and mutual benefit. Only then will we be able to establish a real and fair international partnership for development and ensure the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker for this specific meeting focused on development.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 47 and 113.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.